

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 11-18 remain in the application. Claims 11-18 are subject to examination. Claim 11 has been amended.

Under the heading "Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103" on page 3 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 11-18 have been rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,609,419 B1 to Bankart et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,591,671 B2 to Brown under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 11 includes an infrastructure body having an electrically conducting conductor element electrically insulated from ground.

The Examiner has equated the wheel rims, wheel axle, and the body of the vehicle with the electrically conducting conductor element defined in claim 11. Bankart et al., however, specifically teach that these components are connected to ground (column 12, lines 34-36). Therefore the features of claim 11, which have been copied above, are not taught in Bankart et al.

In discussing the teaching of Bankart et al., the Examiner stated that a non-contact coupling method or capacitive coupling can be used to transmit power in one direction and receive a signal in the other direction. The Examiner

stated that a conducting plate antenna separated by an air gap is used and referred to Fig. 6. The Examiner also stated that the electric potential on one plate produces a localized electric field that induces a potential on the other (pages 3-4 of the Office action). The Examiner, however, has not specifically mentioned the claimed transmitter coupling element or the claimed receiver coupling element in relating the claimed invention to the teaching of Bankart et al. Applicants have, therefore, assumed that the wheel antenna 2 and the fixed antenna 3 taught in Bankart et al. have been equated with the transmitter coupling element and the receiver coupling element in claim 11, and it seems reasonable to make such an assumption. If the Examiner has equated the teaching Bankart et al. with claim 11 in a different manner, applicants kindly request that the Examiner provide an explicit explanation in the next office action.

Claim 11 has been amended to even more clearly define the invention.

Support for the changes can be found by referring to Fig. 1, for example.

Claim 11 now more clearly specifies that the electric near field is coupled from the transmitter coupling element into the electrically conducting conductor element (which is electrically insulated from ground) of the infrastructure body, and that the electric near field is then coupled out from the electrically conducting conductor element of the infrastructure body into the receiver coupling element of the central receiver.

Bankart et al. do not teach such features. In Bankart et al., the electric field is directly coupled between the wheel antenna 2 and the fixed antenna 3. There is not an infrastructure body that couples the electric field between these two antennas 2, 3.

The sensor module 1 is connected to the wheel antenna 2 by a wire 36 (column 12, lines 57-60). The relay module 4 is either integral with the fixed antenna 3 or it is connected to the fixed antenna 3 by a coaxial cable or twisted pair wire (column 13, lines 1-6). These components could not be equated with the claimed infrastructure body.

Therefore, even if the teachings in the cited references were combined for some reason, the invention as defined by claim 11 would not have been obtained.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 11. Claim 11 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art. The dependent claims are believed to be patentable as well because they all are ultimately dependent on claim 11.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 11-18 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Please charge any fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner Greenberg Stemer LLP, No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

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